



Representative Mark Miloscia 30th District

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Appropriations
Children & Family Services

Legislative Evaluation and
Accountability Program
Committee (LEAP)

Narrows Bridge Oversight
Committee

Toll-free

Legislative Hotline:

1-800-562-6000

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1-800-635-9993

2004 Legislative Update

Dear Friends,

First, I'd like to wish you and your family best wishes in '04. The New Year's celebration marks not only an end but even more importantly, a new beginning. It is a chance to remember past times and hope for even better ones ahead.

New Year's also means a fresh beginning for the Legislature, as we reconvene in Olympia to carry on the state's business during the 2004 Legislative Session. I plan to continue making progress on the issues that affect Washington's working families.

We made great strides forward last year with a Transportation budget that will begin unclogging some of our worst chokepoints and getting our infrastructure on solid ground for future economic growth. We also passed an unprecedented Capital Budget – the budget that funds new construction in our communities like higher education buildings and public works projects. These two budgets will generate over 30,000 new construction jobs that will carry us well into the future.

In spite of these gains, I also hope to resolve many outstanding issues resulting from a huge fiscal deficit and ultimately a budget that decimated the services that many of our most needy and hard-working families need and deserve. I voted against last year's Operating Budget because I couldn't agree to cut over 20,000 families off of Basic Health Care coverage, nor could I agree to cut funding to K-12 education for smaller classes and better teacher pay, as well as workforce training. I intend to see that those cuts are restored and to ensure that our biggest key to economic success – our state's hard-working families - are not left behind.

I hope that you will find this newsletter helpful for staying up to date on the latest from Olympia. In return, I'd like to ask for your help in delivering the most effective government for the 30th legislative district. I've included a brief survey that I hope you will fill out and return to me. It is meant to help me gauge what is most important to you, so we can work together to make the 30th – and all of Washington – a great place to live and work for all of us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Mark Miloscia in black ink.

Mark Miloscia
State Representative
30th Legislative District



State Rep. Mark Miloscia

Education – An Investment in our Future

Finding jobs won't matter unless we have a world-class education system for our children. Students in Washington should have the best schools and the best teachers.

This year's high school freshmen will be the first class required to pass the state's standards test, the WASL. I do not want to see any children drop out or fail to achieve our standards. However, I do not believe that a single test is always the best method to evaluate a student or a school. Allowing for commonsense changes in the WASL and alternative ways for students to prove they've mastered core subjects will be a crucial part of a seamless system from public school to Higher Education.

The time has also come to allow our schools to pass levies with a simple majority. Currently, a school levy can fail even when it receives 59 percent of the vote from local citizens. That's not right. We shouldn't make it any harder for our schools to receive the support they need.

Another hot topic this session will be Charter Schools. These are publicly financed schools that are independent of most state laws and rules. The contract, or charter, details how the school will be organized and managed, what students will be taught and expected to achieve, and how success will be measured. Currently, schools funded by taxpayer dollars are governed by elected school boards, and subject to state laws and rules.

As always, this will be a very contentious issue. Some believe that charter schools will be more responsive to the needs of children, especially those that are educationally disadvantaged. Others believe that this just diverts more money away from our public

schools at a time when they can least afford it.

Improving Health Care Accessibility

The cost of health care in our country is at alarming levels, forcing many of us to choose between food or heat or the prescriptions and care we need. For others of us, it isn't even a matter of choice – health care is not available for them or their children.

Some seem to think that when we limit the amount of people on the Basic Health Plan or when we cap the number of individuals who can receive health insurance we are saving money. But that's just not the case. That only forces us to practice emergency medicine which can be exponentially more expensive than practicing preventative medicine. That means restoring the cuts made to the Basic Health Plan last year, increasing the amount of low-income families that can receive health care. We can't climb our way out of recession by leaving some behind.

I will also be working on ensuring low-cost prescription drugs for our citizens by allowing their purchase from Canada for a fraction of what they would cost here in the United States. There is no reason why Americans should pay more for the same drug than those in any other country. It will be an uphill battle against a very powerful pharmaceutical lobby, but I believe the fleecing of America's seniors and health care consumers by these hugely profitable companies must end.

Looking for discounts on prescription drugs?

A new toll-free phone number may be able to help.

The Washington State Legislature created the Pharmacy Connections program to help senior citizens and others take advantage of prescription-drug discounts they may be eligible to receive.

The Senior Information and Pharmacy Connections Line is available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. **Call 1-888-435-3377**

Further information about the Pharmacy Connections program and Washington state's prescription-drug reforms can be found at: www.rx.wa.gov.

The Capital Budget

The Capital Budget allocates money for specific building projects around the state. Public works projects such as schools, parks, and other construction projects all fall under the Capital Budget, and create family-wage jobs for our citizens in the process. During the first session of the '03-'04 biennium, we passed a \$2.57 billion budget into law to create more than 13,000 private sector, family-wage jobs across Washington state.

I'm happy that we were able to secure a total of \$487, 495 for the 30th District. This money will pay for the following projects in our area:

An Interurban Trail Trailhead	\$31,495
The Historical Cabins Project ...	\$106,000
A Boys & Girls Club	
Youth Development Center	\$100,000
Funding for West Hylebos	
State Park	\$250,000

2004 Legislative Update

Taking the Money out of Politics - Campaign Finance Reform

Here in Washington, we are lucky to have some of the toughest ethics laws in the nation governing political campaigns. They allow us to see exactly where every dollar is raised and spent. But that isn't enough - we must always endeavor to

strengthen the ties between our elected officials and citizens.

That is why I will introduce the Washington State Clean Elections Act of 2004. This legislation will allow candidates the option to abide by voluntary contribution and spending limits. If candidates choose to adhere to these limits, they will also be eligible to receive a limited amount of public financing. Additionally, voter's pamphlets will state that these candi-

dates have agreed to limit themselves in the contributions they receive and in their spending.

This legislation will take some of the burden of fundraising off of candidates and allow them to focus greater attention where it should be - on the voice of the people, not just the pocketbooks of a few. It will help restore the public's trust, the public's voice, and increased accountability in our democracy.

Where's my legislative update? -

Because of election year mailing restrictions, I am no longer able to send out my electronic legislative updates. State law prohibits "unsolicited" mailings at state expense during an election year. Even though you may have requested to receive them, the e-memos are still considered "unsolicited." Mailing restrictions apply to letters, newsletters, brochures, and other pieces of literature mailed at public expense. (An e-mail sent on a member's House-issued computer would be considered "mailed" at public expense.)

The important thing to remember is that I will always be able to respond to your individual comments and questions. So if you see something in the newspaper, have a question about a bill, or have a problem with a state agency, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can find my contact information on the front page.

What Do You Think?

What is your top concern?

In your neighborhood or town _____

For the state of Washington _____

For our nation _____

Jobs

Do you know anyone who has lost their job?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are you worried about losing your job or your health coverage?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What should we do to create jobs?

Better training and retraining for workers

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Provide tax incentives to create family-wage jobs

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Prevent outsourcing of Washington state jobs

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Health care

Do you have health coverage?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you know anyone who has trouble paying for their prescription medicine?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you feel that Washington State citizens should have the right to purchase needed prescription drugs from Canada?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Education

Do you have children or grandchildren in our public schools?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are you worried about your children or grandchildren getting into college, or having the money to pay for tuition?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are these reforms a good idea?


Prevent teacher strikes with binding arbitration

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

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State Representative Mark Miloscia

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Divert taxpayer money from public schools to charter schools

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Taxes

Do you think our tax system is fair to the middle class and working families?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What reforms do you support?

Cut taxes and the services they pay for

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Reduce sales tax, property tax and implement an income tax

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

The State Primary Which system do you support?

- ☐ Modified Blanket Primary, Top Two Go To General Election: Voters do not declare their party affiliation when they register to vote, and are not restricted to voting for candidates from only one major party. Their choice is not made public record. For each partisan office, the two candidates who receive the most votes appear on the general election ballot, regardless of party affiliation.

- ☐ Open Primary, Private Declaration of Party Affiliation: Voters are not required to declare their party affiliation until they vote, receiving one ballot for the major party they choose. The choice they make as to which party's ballot they select is not made public.
- ☐ Do Nothing: All candidates would appear on the general election ballot similar to the situation in the recent California recall election